



"Serving Oregon Wheat Producers since 1926"

May 19, 2003

The Honorable Greg Walden
House of Representatives
1404 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

SENT VIA FAX: (202) 225-5774

RE: Support for HR 1904 – The Healthy Forests Restoration Act

Dear Representative Walden:

The purpose of this correspondence is to express the Oregon Wheat Growers League support for HR 1904 – The Healthy Forests Restoration Act. Oregon's wheat producers appreciate your efforts to improve the ecological integrity of all forests and rangelands and to protect Oregon's rural and urban communities.

Oregon's wheat farmers understand the importance of healthy watersheds, critical habitat for animal species and clean air sheds which are possible only with good management practices and balanced regulatory structures. All too often, the natural resource community is over-regulated in an effort to address environmental issues beyond the individual producers control or sphere of influence. As a result, the farmer is expected to absorb the cost of the regulation with no voice in the process or ability to pass on the cost.

HR 1904 clears the way for the federal land management agencies to implement a cohesive strategy on the landscape that reduces the volatile high-risk forest fuels, using an appropriate mix of management practices, including thinning and harvesting, followed by prescribed fires, and increased private, local, and state contracts and partnerships for more effective fire suppression and pre-fire management of federal forest lands.

Because the measure only applies to areas most in need: around communities and watersheds, on high-risk lands encompassing habitat for threatened and endangered species where wildlife officials have identified catastrophic fire as a threat to the viability of the species, and on high-risk landscapes particularly susceptible to disease and bug infestations, the OWGL believes this to be a balanced approach to managing and maintaining healthy forests in Oregon which ultimately translates into increased benefits for all residents in the State, both in the rural and urban communities.

As this matter comes before the House of Representatives for final approval, the OWGL encourages and applauds your ongoing effort to educate fellow members about the importance of a healthy, well balanced and effectively managed natural resource industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tammy Dennee", is written over a large, loopy circular flourish.

Tammy I. Dennee, Executive Director
OREGON WHEAT GROWERS LEAGUE

Cc: Paulette Pyle, Oregonians for Food & Shelter
Oregon Wheat Growers League Board of Directors
Oregon Wheat Commission